



Alex Harris  
State Director of Adult Education  
Iowa Department of Education

Dear Alex,

CASAS has just learned of an informal communication from OVAE in response to one state's inquiry about the approval status of the **CASAS Life and Work Listening** series. CASAS wishes to clarify the status of both the Life and Work Reading series and the Life and Work Listening series.

Please note that the CASAS **Life and Work Reading** series is NRS-approved through 2017. Programs may continue to use these reading tests for ESL (and ABE) assessment through 2017. If your state only uses CASAS reading assessment for ESL learners and does not use listening assessment, this communication is not applicable.

CASAS would like to provide some background information about the status of the **Life and Work Listening** series.

- The Life and Work Listening tests were under development before the NRS test submission regulations were finalized.
- In April 2008, all test publishers were required to submit tests to OVAE for NRS approval. The tests that were approved for NRS were listed in the February 2010 Federal Register.
- In July 2008, the Life and Work Listening tests were completed. Because CASAS tests in general had been approved for use with NRS, more than 30 states adopted the new listening tests at this time.
- In October 2009, CASAS submitted Life and Work Listening to OVAE, the next scheduled test submission date.
- In late 2010, CASAS received notice regarding the Life and Work Listening series explaining that OVAE is now requiring all assessments to have strict alignment with the NRS classification levels. As a result, the use and interpretation of Life and Work Listening scores has expanded beyond the original purpose of the series requiring the collection of additional validity evidence.
- On October 1, 2011, CASAS submitted a revised version of the CASAS Life and Work Listening series with the additional studies requested. CASAS requested that OVAE conduct the review process as expediently as possible, preferably with a result by March 2012 in order to allow states and local programs to make necessary adjustments. To date, CASAS has received no formal communication from OVAE as to the status of the October 2011 submission.

In a conversation with OVAE recently, CASAS learned that states using the current version of Life and Work Listening may continue to use these assessments only through the 2011-12 program year. On Friday, April 13, 2012, CASAS had a further discussion with OVAE regarding when OVAE would notify test publishers about approval of tests submitted in October of 2011 and also about tests that are approved through February of 2013.

It is our understanding from this conversation that tests approved through February of 2013 may be used through June of 2013 and possibly longer. This would apply to the CASAS Life Skills Listening series and the ECS Listening series.

If CASAS does not receive approval from OVAE of the revised submission of Life and Work Listening by June 2012, CASAS is prepared to support states and local adult ESL programs with Life Skills Listening and ECS Listening. If CASAS does receive approval from OVAE of the revised submission of Life and Work Listening, CASAS is prepared to support states and local adult ESL programs to transition to the revised version.

Jim Harrison will contact you directly to discuss a solution that will work best for Iowa.

In closing, please note that CASAS values the long-term relationship with all adult education program providers and state leadership staff, and we look forward to working closely with you.

Best regards,

Pat Rickard

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